

Additional Information

Tips For Observing and Photographing Dragonflies

Dragonflies can be loosely lumped into categories of “perchers” or “flyers”. Perchers, such as some of the skimmers, have a usual or favorite perch which they return to repeatedly. Some flyers have a usual route, a beat which they fly back and forth in the same area. You can pre-focus your camera or binoculars on that area to get a close look. Some have a large, long beat and are more difficult to predict, so some luck and persistence are required to find them perched. Most odonates are most active in middle of the day, but some are more active early and late, roosting most of the day in the shade. Be prepared, research and study your subjects first to know the preferred habitats. Binoculars, especially close-focus binoculars are a great aid for observing all nature subjects.

Approach slowly, getting closer and snapping away as you go (with today’s digital cameras, you can always delete later), a good distant shot is better than none and will be some aid in identifying later.

Try to align planes of focus; for example, a side view is usually good, so move to the side for a clear side view of the dragonfly. A “3/4 view” can show face and eyes as well as the side. Some field marks are more important than others in differentiating one species from another. Get more than one angle if possible.

Sun at your back is always good for photographic detail but be ready to use flash to “fill” in the detail on the shadow side if the subject is back-lit or in any dark situation.

About ATBI

This brochure was compiled and developed by the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) group. ATBI is an on-going project in Tennessee State Parks and State Natural Areas. The goal of ATBI is to document all species in Tennessee State Parks, monitor long-term trends in specific taxonomic groups, and promote education about and preservation of all biodiversity with increased science and citizen education efforts. To access the ATBI database, go to www.tn.gov/environment/parks/atbi.

For more information about ATBI, please contact David Hill, 7th Floor, L & C Tower, 401 Church St., Nashville, TN 37243. Email david.r.hill@tn.gov. Phone 615-253-2455.

Dragonfly References

Beaton, Giff. 2007. Dragonflies and Damselflies of Georgia and the Southeast. A Wormsloe Foundation Nature Book.

Dunkle, Sidney. 2000. Dragonflies through Binoculars: A Field Guide to Dragonflies of North America. Oxford University Press.

Nikula, Blair et al. 2002. Stokes Beginner’s Guide to Dragonflies. Little, Brown & Company.

<http://www.odonatacentral.org/>. Dragonfly Society of the Americas. This site has checklists of dragonflies by county.

Collecting of plants or animals in state parks and natural areas is prohibited. Please help preserve Tennessee’s natural heritage by leaving plants and animals for others to enjoy.

BURGESS FALLS STATE NATURAL AREA

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Sparta, TN 38583

Phone: (931) 432-5312

www.tn.gov/environment/parks/BurgessFalls/

TENNESSEE STATE PARKS DIVISION OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI)

Dragonflies and Damselflies of Burgess Falls State Natural Area and Putnam County



Photo © Richard Connors

Welcome to the wonderful world of dragonflies at beautiful Burgess Falls State Natural Area! Of the approximate 154 species of odonates (dragonflies and damselflies) in Tennessee, 39 have been documented in this park or Putnam County.

Pictured above is a male American Rubyspot (*Hetaerina americana*). This fairly common damselfly is found at swiftly moving sections of small rivers and streams, including Falling Water River. Males are dark with the distinctive red spots in the wings. Females and immature males come in shades of bronze, green, gold and red.

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Dragonfly and Damselfly Checklist of Burgess Falls State Natural Area and Putnam County

Damselflies (Zygoptera)

Broad-winged Damselflies (Calopterygidae)

- * ☐ Ebony Jewelwing
- * ☐ American Rubyspot

Pond Damselflies (Coenagrionidae)

- * ☐ Blue-fronted Dancer
- * ☐ Violet Dancer
- * ☐ Blue-ringed Dancer
- * ☐ Dusky Dancer
- * ☐ Double-striped Bluet
- * ☐ Familiar Bluet
- * ☐ Stream Bluet
- * ☐ Skimming Bluet
- * ☐ Orange Bluet
- * ☐ Fragile Forktail

Dragonflies (Anisoptera)

Petaltails (Petaluridae)

- ☐ Gray Petaltail

Dragonflies Darners (Aeshnidae)

- ☐ Shadow Darner
- * ☐ Fawn Darner
- * ☐ Cyrano Darner

Clubtails (Gomphidae)

- * ☐ Jade Clubtail
- * ☐ Black-shouldered Spinyleg
- * ☐ Flag-tailed Spinyleg
- ☐ Splended Clubtail
- * ☐ Dragonhunter

Spiketails (Cordulegastridae)

- * ☐ Tiger Spiketail
- ☐ Twin-spotted Spiketail
- ☐ Arrowhead Spiketail

Cruisers (Macromiidae)

- * ☐ Royal River Cruiser

Emeralds (Corduliidae)

- ☐ Common Baskettail
- * ☐ Prince Baskettail

Skimmers (Libellulidae)

- * ☐ Halloween Pennant
- * ☐ Swift Setwing
- * ☐ Eastern (Common) Pondhawk
- * ☐ Spangled Skimmer
- * ☐ Slaty Skimmer
- * ☐ Widow Skimmer
- * ☐ Twelve-spotted Skimmer
- * ☐ Great Blue Skimmer
- * ☐ Blue Dasher
- * ☐ Eastern Amberwing
- * ☐ Common Whitetail
- * ☐ Black Saddlebags

*** Documented in the Park**

Habitat

Burgess Falls State Natural Area is located on the Eastern Highland Rim adjacent to the Cumberland Plateau. There are bluffs, ridges, streams, four waterfalls and a small lake. The Falling Water River forms a canyon which, below the spectacular Burgess Falls, ends at Center Hill Lake.



Environmental Stewardship Award

The Burgess Falls Native Butterfly Garden was the recipient of the 2006 Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award in Excellence in Parks and Recreation. This garden was a joint effort of the park staff, Putnam County master gardeners, scout groups and other volunteers. The plants were purchased with Iris Fund money and all are native plants of Tennessee.

Good spots

- *Stream, stream-side and emergent vegetation
- *Lake, lake-side and emergent vegetation
- *Trails, sunny spots and seeps
- *Butterfly garden

Notes
